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MECHANIZATION OF FREIGHT HANDLING CONTINUES; RAILROADS' POSITION IN ECONOMY NOTED

LABOR-CONSUMING OPERATIONS MECHANIZED -- Trud, No 158, 7 Jul 49

USSR railroads are increasingly mechanizing heavy labor-consuming operations. In 1948, 24.4 percent of freight handling was carried out by mechanical methods, or 4.4 percent more than in 1947. This was accomplished by the addition of new and the better utilization of old machinery. This mechanization released 2,000 stevedores for other duties and speeded up the turnaround time of freight cars. As a result of mechanization of freight-handling operations, the average standing time of freight cars being loaded and unloaded on the Western Railroad Okrug was about 83 percent less in 1948 than in 1947.

The fuel dumps of many locomotive depots are equipped with coal dumping aidings, coal-fueling gantries, systems of section bunkers designed by Stalin Laureate Rozhnovskiy, and powerful steam and electric bucket cranes. Last year 40 percent of dumping, 80 percent of moving and piling, and 85.3 percent of locomotive fueling of coal was mechanized in these dumps.

Ballast-laying machines, track-layers, track planes, and self-dumping cars are replacing shovels, picks, and crowbars in the construction and repair of railroads. Work with the track-laying machines is four times as fast as manual methods. Mechanization of track-laying operations increased from 34 percent in 1947 to 54 percent in 1948, and the corresponding increase in earth operations in railroad construction work was from 57.6 to 68.5 percent.

The Ministry of Transportation is considering the mechanization of repair and running operations on such truck lines as the Moscow-Sochi and the Moscow-Kirov-Novosibirsk.

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Bridge cranes are in use in many car depots for such operations as car overhauling, hauling of wheel assemblies, placing of doors in freight cars and hatches in gondola cars. The use of bridge cranes in the car depots of the Tomsk Railroad saves about 345,000 man-hours.

There are, however, some inadequacies in this mechanization program. In many cases, the accounting of machine operations is poorly organized. The operations of these machines should be carried out according to a time schedule. Repair of hoists and cranes is unsatisfactory and the supply of spare parts for them is insufficient. The setting up of snow fences should be mechanized.

MECHANIZED FREIGHT HANDLING GOOD IN PLACES, LAGS ELSEWHERE -- Gudok, No 87, 22 Jul 49

There are at present more than 500 worker-correspondents on many systems of the railroad network who are reporting on the mechanization in freight stations and industrial sidings.

Mechanization is being successfully employed on the Kizel section of the Perm' Railroad System, especially in the stations of Kizel, Gubakha, Obogatitel', and Slazhenno. Loading has been doubled through the installation of a new transporter at the potassium combine served by the Solikamsk Station.

Mechanization of freight operations in the stations of Ukhta and Tretiy Promysel, of the Pechora System, has considerably raised carloadings and reduced car delay.

Delay of rolling stock being loaded with timber products grows greater every month in the station of Pay, Kirov System. Disorder in the timber exchange and lack of coordination in the operations of the railroad workers and shippers has turned the station into a bottleneck. The elevators, automatic cranes, and electric hoists are not being used. The Kostousovo Station of the Sverdlovsk System does not organize its work properly and does not make efficient use of its machinery.

PROFITABLENESS OF HUMP YARDS DISCUSSED -- Gudok, No 89, 27 Jul 49

There are at present more mechanized hump yards in the USSR than in any capitalist country, including the US. The question of profitable operation of mechanized hump yards is one of primary importance. Unfortunately, many of these yards are not operated on a profitable basis. In Kochetovka, losses resulting from poor organization of hump operations amounted to 500,000 rubles in May 1949. Delay of cars in transit was 8.3 hours above the norm.

Upkeep of the hump-yard installations in many cases amounts to 50 percent of the entire cost of marshalling freight cars. In many cases station heads and engineers do not maintain the necessary control over expenditures of compressed air and electric power. At present, to handle one freight car requires up to 1.3 kilowatt-hours of electric power, as against a norm of 0.25-0.60 kilowatt-hours, or 0.35-6.0 cubic meters of compressed air. It costs four times more to maintain hump-yard installations in the stations of Khabarovsk, Likhaya, Chelyabinsk, Kochetovka, Kupyansk, and Darnitsa, than in the stations of Perovo, Baladzhary, and Debal'tsevo.

One of the basic reasons for the unprofitable operation of mechanized hump yards is the mistaken idea that control over the utilization of installations is the concern only of those responsible for the operation of the electromechanical equipment. Another reason is the insufficient utilization of the yards' facilities. Many yards operate at only 50-75 percent of their capacity. The mechanized hump yards of the Lyublino and

Kochetovka stations, for instance, each handle 20 - 30 percent fewer cars than the unmechanized hump yard of the Moscow Marshalling Station of the Moscow-Ryazan' Railroad System. Their capacity is utilized only about 50 percent.

About 20 percent of a hump yard's cost goes for capital repair of the installations, for materials and spare parts, electric power, and upkeep of the establishment serving the mechanisms of the yard. These expenditures depend little upon the quantity of cars handled by the yard.

The following data, taken from the financial reports of various stations, show the influence of the quantity of cars handled by mechanized hump yards on the cost of marshalling:

Cars Handled per Month (in thousands of cars)	Cost of Handling One Car (exclusive of track maintenance)
140-145	1 ruble 62 kopecks
136-140	1 ruble 70 kopecks
130-135	1 ruble 92 kopecks

LOCOMOTIVE UTILIZATION IMPROVES -- Gudok, No 89, 27 Jul 49

In comparison with the first 10 days of July, turnaround time of locomotives in the USSR network as a whole during the second 10 days of July was accelerated by 0.3 hour, the average daily distance traveled increased by 3.9 kilometers, and the average speed excluding stops was raised by 1.1 kilometers per hour. Forty percent of the locomotive park is operating according to the turnaround schedule and 33.8 percent is operating by the roundtrip schedule.

The number of engineers running their locomotives 560 kilometers or more per day increased by 1,023. The locomotives of 1,621 engineers regularly travel 500 kilometers or more per day; 1,860 locomotives make daily runs of 400 - 500 kilometers.

Locomotives of the Volga Okrug, however, are being utilized poorly. Their turnaround time rose during the second 10 days of July by 0.7 hour (by 0.9 hour on the Orenburg System). Turnaround time in the okrug as a whole is 6 hours above the norm.

PASSENGER TRAINS ADDED -- Vechernyaya Moskva, No 162, 9 Jul 49

The Main Passenger Administration of Ministry of Transportation USSR has added the following trains to the schedule:

Starting 10 July, fast train No 35 will run between Moscow and Riga. Express train No 9 will leave Moscow for Sochi Wednesday and Friday. Fast train No 18 between Moscow and Vladivostok now leaves the Yaroslavl' Station every day except Friday. Starting 10 July a new train, No 52, will operate between Moscow and Yaroslavl'. Extra train No 41 will leave twice a week from the Moscow Belorussian Station for Vil'nyus.

GENERAL RAILROAD DATA -- Gudok, No 89, 27 Jul 49

The total length of railroads in the USSR is now 115,000 kilometers. Double tracks have been laid on all sections subject to heavy traffic.

The average distance traveled by raw materials and goods from the areas of production to the areas of consumption is 700 kilometers.

During the war, at the time of the battle of Moscow, Ural and Siberian troops were brought to Moscow by railroad at speeds of 800 - 900 kilometers per day. During 3 months of the war, more than 1,300 heavy enterprises were evacuated to the east by railroad. To evacuate one Bryansk enterprise required 30,000 freight cars. In all, 15 million cars of equipment, materials, and personnel were evacuated to the east during the war. More than 50,000 kilometers of track destroyed by the Germans were repaired under enemy fire.

The material worth of the Soviet railroad systems comprises one sixth of the funds of the USSR economy. Transport requires a quarter of all the metal used in the country and one third of all the coal produced.

On the eve of World War II, there were about 2,000 kilometers of electrified railroad in the USSR.

The largest railroad construction project of the postwar Five-Year Plan is the South Siberia Line from Yenisey to the Volga, stretching almost 4,000 kilometers. The volume of construction on this line is 3 - 4 times that of the Turkestan-Siberian line. The line transports the steel of Magnitogorsk, coal of the Kuznets Basin, wheat from the steppes of the trans-Ural region, Kazakhstan, and Altay, ores of Bashkiria and Ala-Tau in the Kuznets Basin, coal from Ekibastuz, and salt from Kulunda.

At the end of the postwar Five-Year Plan the volume of operations of USSR transport will be four times the prewar volume of operations on the railroads of England, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan put together.

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